

THE OMEN

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 6





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Volume 25, Issue 6

December 9th, 2005

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to submit

Submissions are due Saturdays before 5 p.m. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Jacob Lefton, Merrill B307, x4371. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to jwl04@hampshire.edu

And be sure to read our policy box at the bottom of the next page before submitting.

Visit the Omen's spankin' new website! omen.hampshire.edu

Happy Birthday Molly!

- Conor Peterson & the Omen Staff

I HAVE THE BEST POT AND YOU CAN'T HAVE IT!

Editorial

by Abby Ohlheiser, Editor-in-Chief

Even though I won't be here next semester, it is premature for me to write my traditional "fuck you, Hampshire" editorial, and the only "issue" I can think of that I might have addressed (the Coke ban vote) has already been beaten unconscious. Therefore, this week I will bring you two topics that start with the letter "P": pots and page counts.

Page counts first, since it's at least related to the Five College system. My Mt. Holyoke class has the shortest paper by far due of any of my classes this semester, 7-10 pages. Imagine my surprise when a girl, last week, after having the assignment specifications for a month, raised her hand and said "Gee professor, 7 pages is awfully long for a paper!"

To the credit of the other students in the class, about 1/2 rolled their eyes. 7 pages has not been an "awfully long" paper since sophomore year in high school. Is it "Hampshire" to react to a request from a student to shorten the length of a 7-10 page paper by thinking "if the professor considers it, I will start to argue for the longer paper, because I want to write it" or is it just general academic interest? I am inclined to say the latter. Yes, I am an academic snob, and yes, it is sort of hypocritical to make fun of other

schools and their whole "worrying about grades and page count" thing while taking pride in my ability to write more pages-per-semester. Deal.

On a related note, my pot is much better than yours. It has a strainer built in to the lid, meaning that I saved money on a separate colander, and I save time since I don't have to spend precious seconds of my day rummaging through cabinets looking for one. It's just the right size for a variety of jobs: pasta, soup, chai, veggies, you name it. It's easy to clean and doesn't take up extra cabinet space! Are you sick of rummaging opening up your cabinets and seeing only a massive colander and piles of pots? Worry no more! The ultimate pot experience is here! Available at Target stores everywhere. Accept no imitations. It's genius! It's super! I bet it could write a 7-10 page paper, easy!

On another note, please welcome your editor-in-chief for next semester, Jacob Lefton. Jacob is a second-year who enjoys over committing himself for the greater good, brushing his hair, red silk sheets, and satin dresses. I have full confidence in his ability to keep the ship running next semester, so submit something! His email is jwl04@hampshire.edu, so if you have something to submit for next semester, send it his way.



policy

The *Omen* is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the *Omen* receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The *Omen* will not edit anything you write

(except spelling and grammar).

You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the *Omen* do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no *Omen* staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Leadership Center at 6PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The *Omen* loves you.



How to Solve the Local Foods Issue: Eat Local Vegetarians

by Jacob Lefton

I am all in favor of eating local foods and supporting local farmers. I am not a fan of genetically modified anything, or ultra-big business, and I do know some local farms. But the crux of the matter is that there is only so much food grown locally in New England, and definitely not enough to provide for the entirety of Hampshire College until the next growing season.

I have a modest proposal which will solve our local foods needs. The Hampshire campus has a population of approximately 1400 students, probably a third of which are vegetarians. That makes approximately 466.667 vegetarians. Used sparingly, they can last the winter.

Everybody knows that ruminants make the best eating, and vegetarians are an indigenous population living right in our lush valley! They don't go away in the winter, and they aren't too fierce and gamey in the summer. In fact, they aren't gamey at all. Research has shown that carnivores taste worse than herbivores, because they spend all their time hunting and eating meat.

Plus, we would no longer have to worry about getting enough vegetables

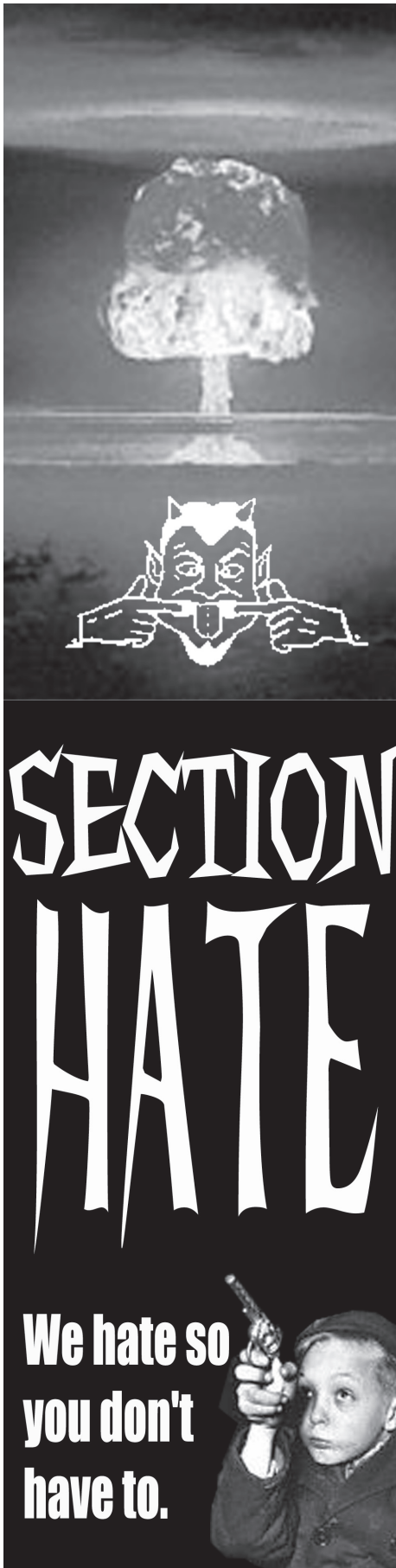
to eat, because if you are what you eat, then there are plenty of vegetables to go around. One great thing about this law of science is that the stock of vegetarians becomes self replenishing for next year, along with whatever new vegetarians choose to move into the happy valley.

“In this project I also plan to get my multicultural perspective by practicing what the Native Americans call “using everything and wasting nothing”. Vegetarian skin can be tanned to make clothing: Goodbye Gap!”

In this project I also plan to get my multicultural perspective by practicing what the Native Americans call “using everything and wasting nothing”. Vegetarian skin can be tanned to make clothing:

Goodbye Gap! We can also make teepees when we've made enough clothes: Hello Student Center! Wow! The benefits to Hampshire College are enormous! We can even burn dried vegetarian dung for fuel: Goodbye Big Oil! And use their bones for tools: Goodbye Wal*Mart!

In conclusion, eating local vegetarians not only solves the local foods problem, but it also solves the big business and big oil problems! Vegetarians are the socially conscious food. Eat a vegetarian for social justice!



Can't Stay Away

by Kelsey Freeman

So...for this semester, I've been on leave. Due to some academic blunders of my own doing, and some administrative blunders of the paperwork kind on part of various offices on campus, I was left last semester with no alternative (that I or the advising office could see, anyway) but to go on leave for this fall. Now, despite my occasional outbursts against various parts of the 'Hampshire Experience', Hampshire is very close to my heart, and so I chose to live just down the road, in the center of Amherst, with a Hampshire graduate, and a Div 3.

I had nothing better to do, so I took on two internships, one with an inept woman trying to teach 14 year old girls how to make movies (if I have to watch one more 6th grader complain about makeup colors...), and another with a local public access television station, and in my spare time, I came to socialize at Hampshire.

At first, this worked out just fine. I would get off work in the late afternoon, drive over to Hampshire, park in the Dakin/Merrill lot, and hang out until the late evening/night, then head back to my apartment. No real harm done. Then, seeing as I have a boyfriend at Hampshire, I started wanting to stay overnight sometimes. This was a problem. Now, I knew something about Hampshire's 'leave policies', but

all I knew was something vague about that someday, somehow, students on leave weren't really welcome on campus. Now, having not had the most pleasant run-ins with public safety in the past (for unrelated incidents), I wasn't about to march up to them and say "Hey, I think I'm not supposed to be here, but...um... can I park here overnight?", so I simply chose to park overnight, at my own risk in the Dakin/Merrill lot. So...I got a ticket. Then another one. Then another one. Then another. It was really hit or miss, about one in 3 nights, I'd say. After the fourth ticket, I was heading out to my car, to go to work, and there was the dreaded bright orange sticker on my window, and a boot on my wheel. Public safety meant business, and they wanted to talk.

I went down to their office. They knew who I was, and they knew what was up. They knew I was on leave, they knew who I was staying with and why I was on campus. They told me, in no uncertain terms, that unless I had an appointment with a faculty member or a staff member, I was not allowed on campus, and at no point was I ever allowed in the 'residential areas'. As someone who has many friends on campus, and strong ties to the community, this was a heartbreaking discovery. Just because I am not an active student right now, I am

not allowed on campus?

Why? Alumni are. Guests are. Why not a student on leave? Why am I suddenly lower than Joe Schmoe friend of Moe? Obviously, I decided to fight this. So, I went to Mike Ford. What Mike Ford told me was even more confusing. He said that, in fact, I *was* allowed on campus, but I *wasn't* allowed to access faculty or staff, like public safety said (or like advising had told me I in fact *needed* to do), but that I was not allowed to stay overnight, because that was considered "using Hampshire's resources". You see, in NSNS, all it says about students on leave, is that we are "not allowed to make use of campus resources". How vague can you get? Really, since it's so vague, I've been giving that my own definition this semester, since nobody seems to be able to give me an answer, but I think it needs an answer.

Hampshire needs a more definitive policy about their leave students. And it needs to not be based around one or two leave students who, one or two years ago, snuck around, actually living on campus - Hampshire needs to stop punishing everyone else for the misdeeds of the few. Students on leave should be treated as regular guests, or even better than guests, like alumni are. We are, of course, still students of the college.



SECTION SPEAK

by Linnaea Furlong

Things I've Learned at Hampshire:

Okay, so being a first year, after one semester I've come to understand things a little bit more about Hampshire.

1. There are Jewish people here. Really! More than the one Jewish kid per class at home. In fact there's a whole Kosher mod. Whoa.
2. Cricket is incredibly more fun than baseball, and you even can hit the ball. Wait, maybe that's because the Indian kids were being nice to me...
3. Daleks! Exterminate!
4. There's a new season here. It's called fall, and lasts like months!
5. Bathrooms are secret passages to other realms, such as G2.
6. "Food" is a relative term. Especially as it relates to SAGA. However, vegan cake is quite possibly one of the best foods in the universe.
7. Sexuality is an hour long debate, not just a word.
8. Hampshire has the amazing paradox of tuition of 40,000 dollars and still no money.
9. The only building you can find dogs in is the building which says No Pets on the door.
10. Buying Coke at Wal*Mart is the worst sin someone can possibly commit.
11. Free Laundry is one of the primary joys of the universe.
12. To make a Div 3 you take a topic,

add women or an ethnic group, and "for Social Change" and you're set. For example, "Pokemon as it Relates to Women for Social Change"

13. Div 3 people have the amazing ability to not be seen. Ever. In fact, do they really exist?

14. Buses are special. They have amazing turning radiuses. They even can shake like mad, make funny noises and not fall apart! I think...

15. It takes ten minutes to get to Hadley by car, but an hour and a half by bus.

16. Cows are fun.

17. To make a Hampshire outfit, you close your eyes, grab like five things from the closet and wear them all at once! Funky Clash Power!

18. Hampshire has this amazing thing! It's called the internet! You can talk to people, keep a journal, send mail, and even get free music and movies! Wow! Who would've thunk it?!

19. Most of Hampshire is acronyms. Maybe this is to confuse the Man.

20. Hampshire students will protest corporations, eat organic to avoid chemicals, and be vegetarian, but still will smoke. I have yet to understand this.

21. In the end, it's all about smoking naked in the rain while Admissions tours walk by.

And in conclusion: Kill the gay baby whales!



**News, Commentary,
Announcements,
Propaganda,
Editorials.**

Plato's Cave Today

by: Alex Bresee (Berklee College of Music)

In life today, plato's allegory of the cave takes on an entirely new meaning. When Plato originally wrote of his conception of most people's conception of truth as blazingly misguided falsehood, religion was the only way to be. Everyone was totally up for a god-worshipping, sacrifice-offering, chanting, praying hootin hollerin good time. It was a vast minority of intellectuals who eschewed the superstitious leanings of their comrades for the gentle introspection and philosophizing life of a philosopher. As much now as it was then, being a philosopher consisted of taking whatever anyone else believes, questioning it, and then giving poorly supported answers to mollify people and to remove their requirement to actually try to figure things out (I AM LOOKING AT YOU, ARISTOTLE). But while back then, the general climate was one of religionism (woo! Meta-nouns!) rather than intellectualism, nowadays it seems everyone has their own personal way of looking around and thinking and generally making life more complicated than it needs to be.

To update the cave for today, we need to introduce a new cave. Let us call it the META-Cave. Imagine that our original cave leads not out into the sun, but into a LARGER room with a MUCH LARGER fire. Now, lets discuss the people in their relative levels of Cave-ness. We have the blindly religious and otherwise dogmatic at one level. These are the people who believe what they were brought up to believe and don't question it at all. These people are like

Plato's original cave dwellers, and these particular ones never make the effort to stare at anything but the shadows on the wall, which they are MIGHTILY staring at, devoting their lives to the phantasmagoric motions of the churning shadows cast by the living fire. We all know a couple people like that. At Berklee its usually Dream Theater rather than fire. John Petrucci can go meedly on the guitar. Ooooo.

A "step" above these people are the journeymen. These people adhere to the dogma offered to them by default after evaluating it as the best dogma that they can find. Unfortunately for them, their evaluation process probably consisted of listening to a Black Sabbath album once and then deciding that Jesus was probably the real deal after all. These people still stare at their shadows, but they do it with the satisfaction of knowing that the shadows are real and the rest is temptation.

Who's next? Lets back up a bit and find this fire! Surrounding the fire we have the defectors. These are the people who were handed a dogma, and rejected it firmly, declaring their individuality and abandoning the harsh restrictive proscriptions of the cruel society that bore them! We all know a couple guys like these. They usually dress in black and write scary things in their notebooks during math class. We don't usually invite them to the parties we hold in the upper reaches of the meta cave.

Speaking of the meta cave, whats going on in there? Well, I'm currently hanging out in the meta cave with a few

of my homies, getting crunk. This cave is few of a massive hodgepodge of people. Here, sipping on wine coolers and eating fancy Hors d'œuvres, are the scientists! These people have abandoned faith of any type, and are living a life based entirely on study, conjecture, evidence, reason. They know they will never find the Truth with a capital T but they also have the comfort of knowing their above the crazy religious guys and those goth kids from the other cave.

Also in here are the religious wanderers, the semi-mystics who bounce from faith to faith, always starting with hope and ending with disillusionment. These are the hippies, new-age psychics, the water-crystal people and energy healers. These people are a little messed up, and I think there's a little more than tobacco in their pipes and a little more than water in their cups. Me and the other sarcastic agnostics are basically doing nothing in here. We're doing what it is we do, ya know? Livin life. Hangin on. Thinking, but not thinking too much. The secret that we know that noone else does is that the Cave is not a cave. It's a bubble. It's a pocket. It's a hole with no entrance. The Cave is a Tomb.

If we could escape, we might see the sun, shining brightly, welcoming us into the day that lay unseen until that glorious moment of awakening, with Jesus and Siddhartha and Elvis there to welcome us into the light. What we need is a jackhammer, or we'll never get out of here.



Almost Ideal: A Dialogue Concerning the Nature of Just About Everything

Section Two: Beyond Berkeley

by: Daniel E. Griffin

The Fifth Dialogue

In which Xavier and Phillip examine the concept of a Material World.

PHILLIP: We have now outlined the simplest possible explanation for the existence of the self and its sensations; however, what we've said does not preclude a more complex explanation, nor the existence of other things or entities.

XAVIER: That is true, but it does make their postulation unnecessary. We have no reason then to suppose the existence of additional entities, and if they did exist then there would be no way of knowing it or of ever having any knowledge of them.

PHILLIP: That does seem the case; nevertheless, given that other explanations are possible, is it not necessary that we examine them?

XAVIER: That is a valid point. In order to accomplish this purpose then, it is first necessary to list any other explanations that seem plausible.

PHILLIP: That is what we must do. To begin then, let us examine those things that our sensations are of – for instance, my sensations of you (that is, your body) standing in front of me; could it not be that there is in fact a real material object that is you, and that that is the cause of my sensations of you standing there?

XAVIER: It seems then that in this case there would be two fundamentally different types of things in addition to the self: perceptions (that is to say, thoughts and sensations), and real material objects that exist independently of them and cause sensations.¹

PHILLIP: Exactly. Although their postulation isn't strictly necessary, the belief in real external objects seems, to me, perfectly reasonable and in line with common sense.

XAVIER: Fair enough. Then let us further articulate this view, in order that we may subject it to analysis. First, in order to recap, we have already established that there must exist perceptions and a self, as well as some sort of God that causes them, correct?

PHILLIP: Correct.

XAVIER: We are now positing, in addition to that, the existence of entities that are fundamentally different, and which cause the sensations of the self, correct?

PHILLIP: That is correct as well.

XAVIER: Let us now spell out and articulate the nature of these differences; on the one hand, we have physical objects. These things exist in space and time, are unperceiving, and are subject to objective and immutable laws. On the other hand, we have the self and its perceptions, which are none of these things. Physical objects have a real existence that is independent of the perceptions of the self, but they somehow cause at least some of those perceptions.

PHILLIP: That is exactly correct. While, as I pointed out, the existence of such objects can be doubted, the belief in them is nevertheless so intuitive that it seems to me impossible to carry such doubt beyond a merely abstract and intellectual exercise.

XAVIER: That does in fact seem to be the case: nevertheless, we must first exam-

ine this proposition in order that we might determine whether it is in fact compatible with what we have already established as knowable. It seems that from the outset there is a problem inherent in what you propose: namely, if perceptions and physical things – or matter, if you prefer – are really fundamentally different, how is it possible that they should interact?

PHILLIP: Perhaps an example would help to clarify.

XAVIER: By all means.

PHILLIP: Very well then; I shall continue with the one already stated – that is, my visual sensations of your body standing in front of me. In this instance, light reflects off of your clothing and body in various wavelengths corresponding to the colors of those things and enter my eye. They then stimulate my optic nerves, which in turn send those signals to my occipital lobe, which then processes that information and works with the rest of my brain to make sense of it and create for me the visual sensation of you standing in front of me.

XAVIER: That seems a sufficient physiological explanation for our purposes, but it fails to answer the central question, which is how processes in the brain – a material thing – cause sensations, which we conceived of as being immaterial.

PHILLIP: That question cannot be answered fully at present due to the limits of our (by which I mean modern science's) understanding of how exactly it is that the brain works.

XAVIER: That is true, but, again, it answers the wrong question. The issue is not a question of the specific way in which the interaction occurs, but its fundamental nature. Even if one were to point to a specific thing within the brain

¹ This can be understood to be analogous to dualism, except that it has already been established earlier that thoughts and memories – that is, all those things com-

monly referred to as “the mind” – are just perceptions like sensations. “The self,” then, is something additional and not the same as the mind (see Dialogue Two).

and say that the interaction occurs when it does a specific thing, this would still not satisfy the question. In order for any such interaction to take place – that is, in order for sensations to be caused by matter (as we defined it) – sensations would have to, in some way be the same thing. If there are such things as brains, and they exist independent of and cause the sensations of the self, then sensations and the brain must be the same type of thing.

PHILLIP: I see now; that does follow.

XAVIER: If material objects are then of the same sort of thing as perceptions, then they cannot exist unperceived.

PHILLIP: That is true, if material objects are perceptions; however, why could not the inverse be the case? What if, instead of material objects being perceptions, perceptions were instead material objects? In this scheme then, sensations, mental processes, and the self are all just physical objects of the sort that we originally described.

XAVIER: This, though, suffers from the same problem. We stated that physical things can and do exist unperceived; perceptions, then, cannot be material things in the same sense, or else they would be existing unperceived, which would make them no longer perceptions.

PHILLIP: That is true; however, why could it not be that perceptions are perceptions by virtue of, and only when, they are perceived, and material objects when they are not?

XAVIER: That view, though, still maintains that material objects and perceptions are really the same thing. Either they are perceptions, which, by definition, can only exist when perceived, or they are material objects that can exist independent of perception. Since we have already established that the existence of perceptions is knowable, and perceptions cannot exist unperceived, it follows that perceptions cannot be material things, if material things can exist unperceived. Therefore,

if there were such things as the material things we postulated, then they would have to be fundamentally different from perceptions, in which case it is impossible that they should interact

PHILLIP: What you have said does in fact seem true; nevertheless, I am still seized by a strong inclination to believe that there exist – in addition to my sensations – real material things that those sensations correspond to.

XAVIER: What do you mean by “correspond to” though?

PHILLIP: I mean that, in addition to the way something appears to me, there is also a thing-in-itself, which, although different from my sensations, is still knowable via them.

XAVIER: Your sensations, though, are the only means that you have of getting information about it. If it is different from your sensations, then this difference must be something unknowable; why, therefore, suppose it to be there at all?

PHILLIP: It is true that my senses are the only way I have of gathering information about it, but I can still know things about apart from what my senses tell me directly by using reason to interpret my sensations. This is what science does; it makes observations, which are themselves merely sensory data, and uses reason to analyze them. The result is knowledge of the thing-in-itself. For example, look at this rock; my sensory perceptions tell me that it is a solid thing with no holes in it. Science, however, has determined that it is in fact composed of myriad minute particles, and the rock is really mostly empty space. This conclusion was then reaffirmed by subsequent observations.

XAVIER: This begs the question though, for you were only able to come to this conclusion by assuming that your sensations really could provide evidence for the existence and nature of something distinct and different from them. If there is no way of knowing about things-in-

themselves besides trusting that sensations do in fact provide evidence of their nature, then their nature is in principle unknowable.

PHILLIP: That is true; however, it doesn't follow from that that there really are no true natures of things. It could still be that there really are things-in-themselves that our sensations correspond to, even though we can never know what they are.

XAVIER: That does follow, but that was never in dispute. There very well could be things distinct from our sensations, but these things would necessarily be something other than our sensations, and therefore of a different nature. If this is the case, then, as we have already seen, they could never cause those sensations; it is impossible then that the two could relate. If this is the case, then to say our sensations “correspond to” them doesn't make any sense. The existence or true nature of these other things then is unknowable, while the true nature of sensations is obvious: they are exactly as they seem to be – that is, they are sensations.

PHILLIP: That is, incontrovertibly, the case.

The Sixth Dialogue

In which Xavier and Phillip examine the Consequences of Materialist Suppositions.

PHILLIP: Despite all of these things that we have said to the contrary, there remain people to whom the existence of material things seems not only possible and conceivable, but necessarily the case. These people hold that matter, in fact, is all that exists, and that it, once properly understood, can account for all of the things that we deem immaterial.

XAVIER: That there exist such people is no doubt the case, and they would be wise to pay heed to those things we have already said; for even if we had not brought to light those problems with

such a belief, then, it seems, it would be impossible for one to believe such a thing consistently, and go about life as if it were true

PHILLIP: Why is that?

XAVIER: Because of those conclusions that one must come to if such a belief were held. If it were true that all there is is material stuff, it follows that nothing one does has, or ever could have, any meaning or significance. Consciousness, even humanity itself, is nothing more than a flicker in the depths of eternity, a doomed cosmic accident. We will have been no more than a fluke of chance: random arrangements of atoms that just happened to reach such complexity as to comprehend their own tragic fate. Civilization, morality, love, hate, knowledge: all are merely the meaningless and futile cries in the dark of mere mortals as they hurtle through space around a sun that will eventually die, and then it shall be as if none of it ever happened. All will fade back into the nothingness that preceded it, and the whole of our history will amount to no more than nothing when compared to the infinite stretches of lifeless void that shall come after.

PHILLIP: That is undoubtedly a bleak assessment; surely it would not be so bad as that? Why could one not do something about this if it were the case, in order that life might be given meaning?

XAVIER: What could one do, besides commit suicide?

PHILLIP: That wouldn't do at all; but suppose one were merely to say 'so what' and proceed to enjoy himself? Is there not something to be said for that?

XAVIER: Assuredly, there is; but what is that compared to an eternity of non-existence, when your whole life will amount to no more than a flicker and afterwards it will be as if it had never happened?

PHILLIP: But why must it be like that? So what if we are nature's unwanted children; can we not rebel? So what if the

universe is merciless; can we not show mercy? What is to stop us from crying in the dark, even if that is all it amounts to? Why can we not defy the universe?

XAVIER: Because we are no more than the universe. How can we, mere clouds of atoms, defy nature when our very defiance is no more than the results of unfeeling laws of physics, preordained since the dawn of time? If matter, unthinking, unperceiving, is all that there is, then there can never be such a thing as the decision to pursue meaning because there can never be such a thing as a choice.

PHILLIP: I see now what you meant by your original statement, for that does necessarily follow, and no man could live as people do while holding such a view and fully considering its consequences.

The Seventh Dialogue

In which Xavier and Phillip examine arguments for Materialism.

XAVIER: We have now shown how the consequences of materialism, if it were truly the case, would be such that no one could ever maintain such a view. Nevertheless, people frequently hold views that are incompatible with one another, and there are still people who ascribe to materialism without pondering those things. I feel it is now necessary to examine those arguments and theories that caused them to support this view initially in order that we might determine their implausibility with absolute certainty.

PHILLIP: That does seem best. To begin, I propose the following argument which I have heard made: it begins by claiming that we know there to be such things as bodies because we can see them and touch them and point them out. However, when looking at another person (that is to say, their body) we cannot see or distinguish any such things as perceptions or mental states: therefore, there must not be any such things.

XAVIER: This argument, of course, begs the question: in attempting to

demonstrate that there are such things as bodies (that is, material objects) is presupposed that there are such things and that they are separate from sensations; we have already demonstrated the problems with this assumption.

PHILLIP: That is true.

XAVIER: More problematic still though is the way in which this argument misrepresents that which we know. We don't "know there to be such things as bodies" because we can't see or touch them; rather, we can have sensations, which we take to be of seeing or touching them. However, as we have already determined, it is meaningless to say that these sensations correspond to things independent and of a nature different from them. We can, therefore, know there to be such things as perceptions, but not bodies.

PHILLIP: That is true also, and the same response can be made to another argument, which claims that people seem to be made of two fundamentally distinct kinds of things: body and mind. However, if these two things are really fundamentally distinct from one another, then it is impossible that they should ever interact. Therefore, since it is obvious to any sane person that there are such things as material objects, that which we take to be the mind must really be material.

XAVIER: You are right in that this argument once again is hopelessly circular in that it presupposes the existence of material things. We have already shown that two fundamentally different types of things interacting is impossible; however, since the existence of material things is, at best, not knowable, this only shows that what we take to be evidence for material things (that is, our sensations) is, and must be, the same thing as the mind: that is to say, perceptions.

PHILLIP: That does follow; still, let us examine one more argument in this vein before we continue. This argument begins by pointing out that perceptions

such as sensations and thoughts can be affected by manipulating the brain, which is a physical thing. Take, for instance for instance, memories: these are undoubtedly mental things which we perceive, but, by damaging the brain in a certain way, one can destroy them. It follows, then, that since affecting the brain, a material thing, also alters mental, perceived things, those things that are taken to be mental must in fact be material.

XAVIER: To begin with, this argument suffers from the same circularity as its predecessors by assuming the brain to be a material thing when the only way we have of knowing (or ever could know) about the brain is through our sensations of it. We have already pointed out the problems with taking the brain to be something else in addition to perceptions; if, then, “the brain” is nothing but perceptions to begin with, then it makes perfect sense to say that affecting the brain affects perceptions. Conversely, if the brain were in fact a material object, then it would be utterly inexplicable that affecting it should affect perceptions, since perceptions (as we have already seen) must necessarily be something different from material objects as we’ve defined them.

PHILLIP: That is the case; but let us now examine, instead, an argument of a different sort. Another argument claims the following: science, the greatest of human achievements, is now able to give accounts of many things that were once only explainable by appealing to a divine entity. Our belief in the existence of a mind is the same sort of thing, and science, once fully developed, will be able to explain that as well. Our belief in such a thing as a “ghost in the machine” – that is, a mind – is merely a product of our lack of understanding.

XAVIER: First of all, I think that we should recall that our purpose in examining these arguments was to determine whether there was a viable materialist

alternative to the explanation that we devised; this, as it stands, is not an alternative explanation, but merely the promise of one. Even if that were the case, it would still be subject to all the problems that we have already discovered in regards to the concept of a material world. Finally, even if that were not the case, it would still stand merely as an alternative to the explanation that we have offered, and would furthermore be a more complicated and therefore less desirable explanation.

PHILLIP: All these things I am forced to grant you.

XAVIER: In addition to these more formal problems, this argument suffers from deeper flaws. First of all, as we determined earlier, science cannot truly tell us anything about things-in-themselves, even if they did exist; science then, cannot explain anything, at least not in the sense that this arguments assumes. At best, science can provide us with a way of thinking about our perceptions that consistently predicts their behavior.

PHILLIP: Since science ultimately rests on those perceptions, that must be the case.

XAVIER: Furthermore, science itself is a type of perception, for it is only thought trusting our sensations and minds that humanity was able to develop science in the first place. If, then, science, when fully understood, were to tell us that perceptions were ultimately reducible to the random movement of atoms, then science itself would be no more than the random movements of atoms and we, consequently, would no longer have any reason to trust it.²

² This passage is taken, more or less, from C.S. Lewis’s “On Living in an Atomic Age,” although it has been altered in order to fit the style and terminology of the dialogue. The original passage reads: “It is only through trusting our own minds that we have come to know Nature herself. If Nature, when

PHILLIP: I’d never thought of that, but it does follow.

XAVIER: Finally, science itself, in its most basic form, contradicts materialism, for science sees the world as having, in addition to matter, immutable laws of nature that govern matter’s behavior;³ these laws, though, are not themselves material. That matter seems to act in a consistent way is what makes science possible in the first place. Additionally, science sees the world as composed not only of matter, but also of having empty space for matter to inhabit, and time for matter to persist though; neither of these things though, in themselves, are material things.

PHILLIP: That also is true.

XAVIER: Even if materialism⁴ were somehow modified so as to account for this, it would still be at odds with science by denying the need for a self-caused entity.⁵ Materialism must necessarily

fully known, seems to teach us (that is, if the sciences teach us) that our own minds are chance arrangements of atoms, then the sciences themselves would be chance arrangements of atoms and we should have no reason for believing them.”

³ See Dialogue One for a specific example of this.

⁴ Although not *always* understood this way, this dialogue defines materialism as the belief that *all* there is is matter, in which case it is necessarily atheistic as well.

⁵ In reading this sentence it is important to distinguish between “science” as a body of knowledge and “scientists” as individuals; while it is true that most scientists are in fact materialists, this is not necessarily relevant; as was noted earlier, people can (and frequently do) hold contradictory opinions. It’s worth noting that science, as we know it today, was born and grew up in Christian Medieval Europe; this, it could be argued, is precisely because the Christian/Jewish perspective of time as being linear rather

view matter as eternal and immutable, but this contradicts contemporary scientific thought, which conceives of the universe as having a definite beginning.⁶ Materialism must hold that the universe has existed for an infinite amount of time, but that contradicts the second law of thermodynamics.

PHILLIP: What is that?

XAVIER: It states that disorder (“entropy”) only ever increases within an enclosed system, until it reaches a maximum amount. If you assume, then, that the universe is an enclosed system – that is to say, there are no extra-material influences – then it cannot have existed for an infinite amount of time, or else it would have become perfectly disordered an infinite amount of time ago.⁷

PHILLIP: That must necessarily be the case.

than cyclical made the development of such concepts as the second law of thermodynamics possible.

6 I.e., the “big bang.”

7 This is reinforced by Einstein’s discovery that the universe is expanding (which, inspired by his pantheism, he initially tried to explain away by introducing a “cosmological constant”; he later called this “the biggest mistake of my life”). Stephen Hawking offered a response to this point by suggesting that perhaps, at some point in the future, the force of gravity would arrest and reverse this expansion, so that the universe would eventually implode back in on itself. He went on to suggest that it might then explode again in another big bang, and that it has always been doing this and always will be; this, its current iteration, is but one among infinite. However, the most current research directly contradicts this claim, as it shows instead that the speed of expansion is actually *increasing*, with the universe heading towards an eventual state of infinite disassociation.

The Eighth Dialogue

In which Xavier and Phillip Examine Emergence and the Relationship between Materialism and Idealism.

PHILLIP: Before we carry our discussion on to other topics, I would like to examine just one more argument for materialism. This argument holds that consciousness (that is to say, perceptions) are emergent properties of the brain; that is, things that are only “visible” at a certain level of abstraction.

XAVIER: I’m afraid that you’ll have to clarify what you mean by that.

PHILLIP: Take, for example, a dot-matrix picture: in it, no single dot looks like more than such; however, when observed collectively they form a picture. Another example would be that of water, where no single H₂O molecule possesses the property of liquidity, yet somehow, when they are put together they form liquid. In the same way (so the argument goes) the mind is not a thing separate from or additional to the matter that composes the brain, but is instead merely a property of that matter that is a result of its arrangement.

XAVIER: This argument is *prima facie* deceptively convincing, but doesn’t hold up to more intense scrutiny. To begin with, it still suffers from the circularity problem that all of the others do. Additionally, this argument in particular is self-contradictory.

PHILLIP: In what way?

XAVIER: If the argument’s conclusion – that is, materialism – is true, then there are no such things as emergent properties, because they can only exist subjectively in sensations. If all there is is matter, then there are no such things as pictures or liquidity, but merely forces and particles. From the materialist perspective, when H₂O molecules are grouped together, they are still no more than H₂O molecules; it is only when you introduce a

perceiver that you have such a thing as wetness. Emergent properties are not real properties of the things, but merely descriptions of how we experience them. It follows from that then that perceptions cannot be emergent, because if they were, then they would not really exist except in perceptions, since they themselves are not things in the matter. Since emergent properties cannot exist except in perceptions, then to say that perceptions are emergent properties is to deny that there are emergent properties at all.

PHILLIP: That does follow, from that understanding of emergence. However, what if the understanding of emergence were changed so that an emergent property was understood to be something additional to and separate from the components of the system. In this understanding, perceptions would in fact be something different from the matter in the brain, but their existence would still be tied to and dependant on it.

XAVIER: This understanding of emergence is no longer compatible with materialism, but is instead a sort of epiphenomenal dualism, as it admits of there being two different sorts of things: matter and perceptions. This, then, suffers from the problems that we have already articulated in regards to the interaction of fundamentally different kinds of things.

PHILLIP: That does seem the case.

XAVIER: Emergence, then, as an explanation of perceptions suffers from the same fundamental problems as all the other arguments for materialism in that it effectively denies that perceptions exist at all (when we have already seen that they are, in fact, evident, whereas matter on the other hand isn’t⁸). Materialism says that matter is different from perceptions, and then says that perceptions are material. This is absurd, as the existence of

perceptions is evident; to say, then that matter and perceptions are the same thing is to deny the existence of matter, and to say that they are different contradicts materialism.

PHILLIP: We are forced to conclude then that materialism is circular and self-contradictory; however, there remains yet one option open to the materialist.

XAVIER: What might that be?

PHILLIP: The materialist might say at this point that our alternative relies on God as the cause of perceptions: why cannot it be that this God is the same with the material world of materialism?

XAVIER: We defined God as the self-caused cause of the self and its perceptions, which is composed of at least two parts, each the cause of the other;⁹ furthermore, we saw how the material world that materialism appeals to cannot be these things; it follows then that God cannot be the material world of materialism.

PHILLIP: In that case the materialist could instead say that the material world is God.

XAVIER: If the materialist did that, then it would be a disavowal of materialism, and would instead be an affirmation of what we said at the beginning; to call the God of our definition the material world is merely to change the terminology. As we have seen already, God cannot be anything like the materialist's concept of a material world, for that concept is based entirely upon perceptions; God, the cause of those perceptions, must necessarily be fundamentally different from what the materialist conceives of as things-in-themselves.

PHILLIP: Then we are forced to conclude that there is no hope for materialism at all, in any form; not only is it not enough to show our alternative as being false, but it is an in-principle impossibility.

The Ninth Dialogue

In which Xavier and Phillip Formulate an Alternative to Materialism and Dualism.

PHILLIP: Now that we have ruled out the possibility of a material world, I feel that it is necessary that we offer a more detailed account of our alternative explanation for the nature of the self's perceptions.

XAVIER: That does seem necessary. To begin, let us recap that which we have already concluded must be the case. We have so far established that there must exist a self¹⁰ of some sort, which has perceptions¹¹ – both mental and sensory – and that there must be in addition a God that is composed of at least two parts existing in a state of mutual causation.

PHILLIP: We did establish the postulation of those things as unavoidable, and that that was the simplest explanation for the existence of the self and its perceptions. However, I feel that at this time it is necessary that we examine this explanation more closely in order that we might determine if there are any flaws in it that we might have missed. To that end, should we not first look more closely at the nature of what we conceive of as the self?

XAVIER: That does seem wise.

PHILLIP: Let us begin then by examining a criticism of the conception of self as perceiver. This criticism begins by pointing out that when one introspects, he or she is unable to find any thing that is permanent and persistent across time that could be called the self. Rather, one finds only impermanent and ever-changing sentiments, thoughts, and desires – that is to say, those things that we labeled as perceptions. It is therefore concluded from this that there is no self but only a “bundle” of perceptions.

XAVIER: The proponents of such a

view would do well to take heed of those things we have already said about why the self must necessarily be distinct from perceptions. This argument is flawed fundamentally because, as we have seen already, the self must be of necessity something that is only one thing – that is, composed of only one part – or else there would be not one self but two. Since we have seen that nothing that is truly only one thing can ever do something to itself, then it follows that the self could not perceive itself. If, then, one were able to find something upon introspection that seemed to be the self, then the mere fact that one would be perceiving it would be proof that it was not in fact the self – that is to say, that which is doing the perceiving.¹²

PHILLIP: That seems that it must be the case; what, though, of those that claim that all knowledge must necessarily be derived from perceptions? They would say if one is unable to perceive the self, then knowledge of it is impossible and one has no reason to believe in it.

XAVIER: Simply because there are perceptions, there must also be something that acts as perceiver. This thing would then be something fundamentally different from perceptions; if all knowledge and concepts are themselves perceptions, and formed from other perceptions, then it is in-principle impossible that one should ever be able know the nature of the self or form a concept of it; however, this is not the same as saying that it doesn't exist. We can still speak of the self and know of its existence even if we are unable to form a concept of it, in the same way that one who has been blind from birth can nevertheless discuss colors and brightness, even though these things are fundamentally different from anything which he as ever experienced. Perhaps an analogy would help to clarify.

PHILLIP: Proceed.

9 See Dialogue Four.

10 See Dialogue One.

11 See Dialogue Two.

12 See Dialogue Two.

XAVIER: Let us imagine then that the self is like an eye, and perceptions are like visual sensations; this eye, then, never has any experience other than that of seeing. Let us further suppose that this eye at no point ever sees another eye or its own reflection in a mirror. Unable to perceive itself, it would never be able to know anything about its own nature, or to form any concept of what sort of thing it is (for the sake of this example, we are positing that there is a mind of some sort attached to this eye). However, merely by observing that it is having visual perceptions it would be able to infer that it exists and that it is a thing that sees. In the same way, the self is a thing that perceives and yet cannot be itself perceived; for this reason, the formation of a concept of the self in the usual sense – that is, in the rearrangement and permutation of perceptions into new – mental – perceptions is not possible, and yet we can infer certain things about it.

PHILLIP: I see now.

XAVIER: To say that the self is just a bundle of perceptions would be analogous to the eye mistakenly thinking itself to be among – or the sum total of – its visual sensations, rather than something removed which has those sensations and is not itself sensed.

PHILLIP: That does follow.

XAVIER: Then let us next look at what we postulated as the cause of the self's perceptions; that is to say, God, as we've defined Him¹³ (for lack of a better pronoun). Is there anything lacking in this explanation that would require us to postulate additional entities or a more complicated conception of God?

PHILLIP: It seems that there is one key objection that could be raised about this postulation, which is to say that this fails to explain the orderliness and continuity of our perceptions. For instance, if there is no object call "tree" that is distinct from

my perceptions of a tree, then why when I look at a tree one moment, turn my head, and then resume looking at the tree, the tree is still there? If the tree exists only in my perceptions of it, then when no one is looking at it it doesn't exist; why, then, does it resume existence when one goes again to look at it?

XAVIER: This seems a poor objection for a number of reasons; first of all, when not looking at the tree, one can never know with certainty that you did in fact look at the tree in the past, but merely that one currently has a perception that is a memory of having looked at the tree. Therefore, the thing being disputed – that is, the so called "continuity" of perceptions – is itself a perception, which is caused by whatever it is that causes perceptions, which is the topic of discussion.

PHILLIP: That is true. However, even if we cannot ever know for certain, let us assume for the sake of the argument that such continuity does in fact exist. Are there still problems with the objection?

XAVIER: In a certain sense "continuity of perceptions" is nonsensical, for what we mean by such a phrase is that what we perceive one moment bears relation to what we perceive the next: for instance, if I were to look at a tree for a full minute, we would say my perceptions of the tree were continuous if I continued to perceive the tree across a span of time. This is nonsensical though, because at no time does one experience the passage of time – rather, we only ever perceive our present perceptions and memories of past ones. Memories, however, are perceived in the present like everything else. Continuity of perceptions then can only mean that to some degree our present perceptions and our memories of past perceptions agree with one-another; for instance, if I both presently see a tree and remember seeing it in the past. If, then, there is such

continuity, it is simply because whatever causes perceptions causes them in that way, and there is nothing in our proposed framework that would fail to allow for that. It is true that in order just to go about our lives – let alone develop such things as science – we must of necessity assume such continuity even if it is in-principle unknowable. While our framework is able to account for this phenomenon, the materialist's alternative isn't, as it fails to offer an explanation for such things as natural laws.

PHILLIP: I see. The real question then is "what accounts for those perceptions," and as we've seen it can't be physical objects in the normal sense.

XAVIER: That is true, but that is not to say that we are mistaken to think there are such things as the tree; rather, we are mistaken to speak of a tree-in-itself separate from and the cause of our perceptions of the tree, for to do so would be an unnecessary postulation. We have determined that God as we've defined Him is the minimum that it is necessary for one to posit in order to explain the origins of the self's perceptions; to posit a tree as material abject then is to say that the tree causes some perceptions and that God causes the tree, which is needlessly complicated. Instead, when we speak of the tree we should refer to those sensations – and that concept created out of those sensations – which, by convention of language, we designate as "tree." The tree is no more than that: the sight of bark and leaves, the smell of foliage, the feel of wood, and etc. To speak of the tree-in-itself – that is, that which causes those sensations – is merely to speak of that which causes all sensations; that is to say, God.

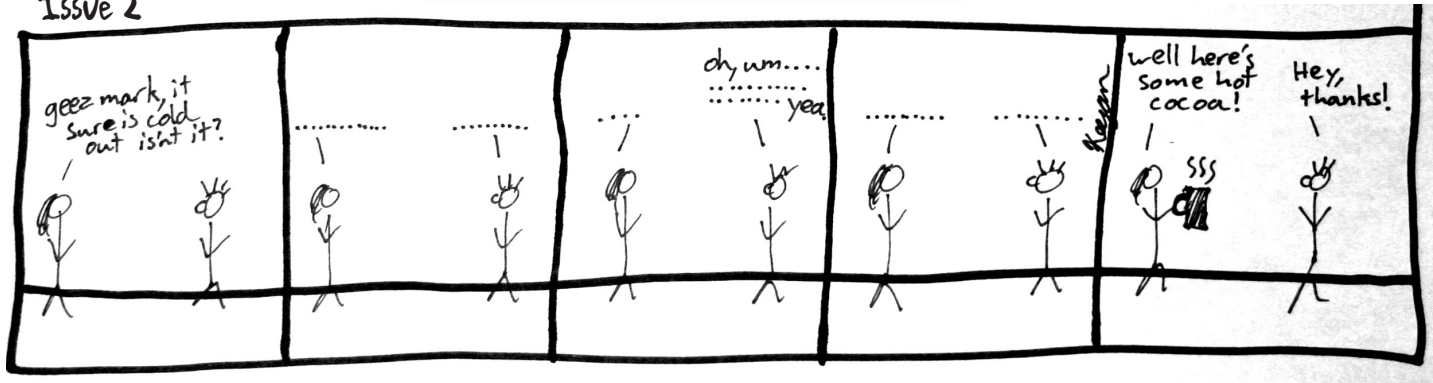
PHILLIP: It must be so.



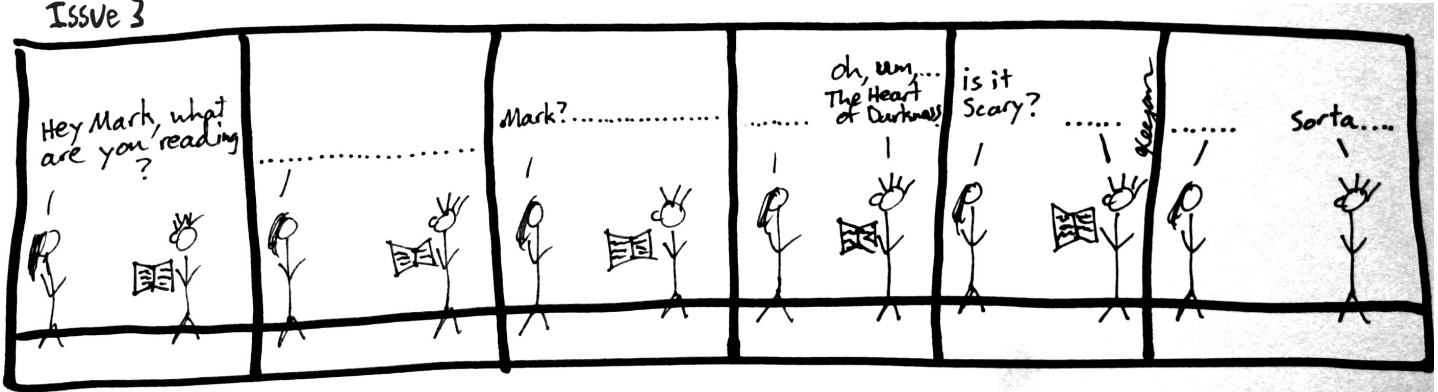
The Peeps

by Keegan Kuvach

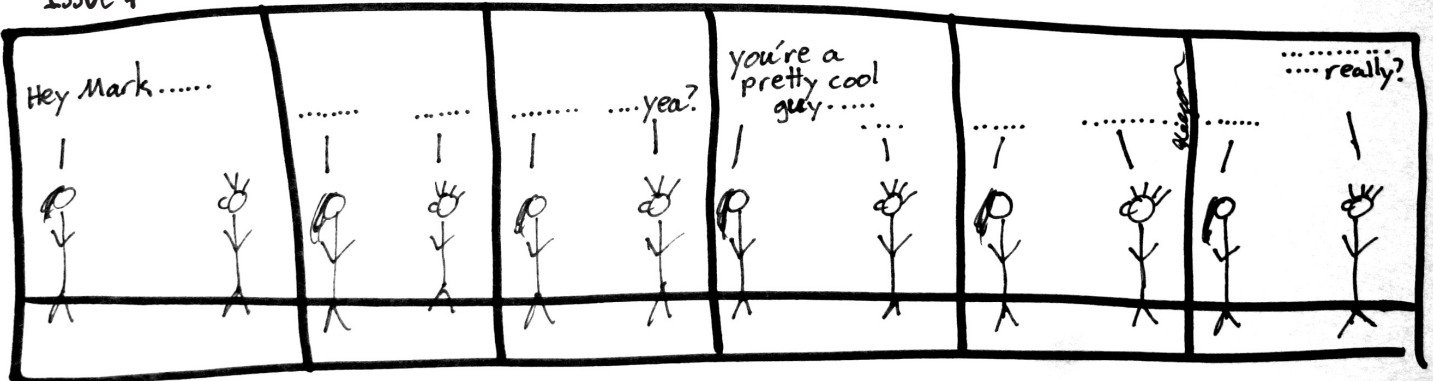
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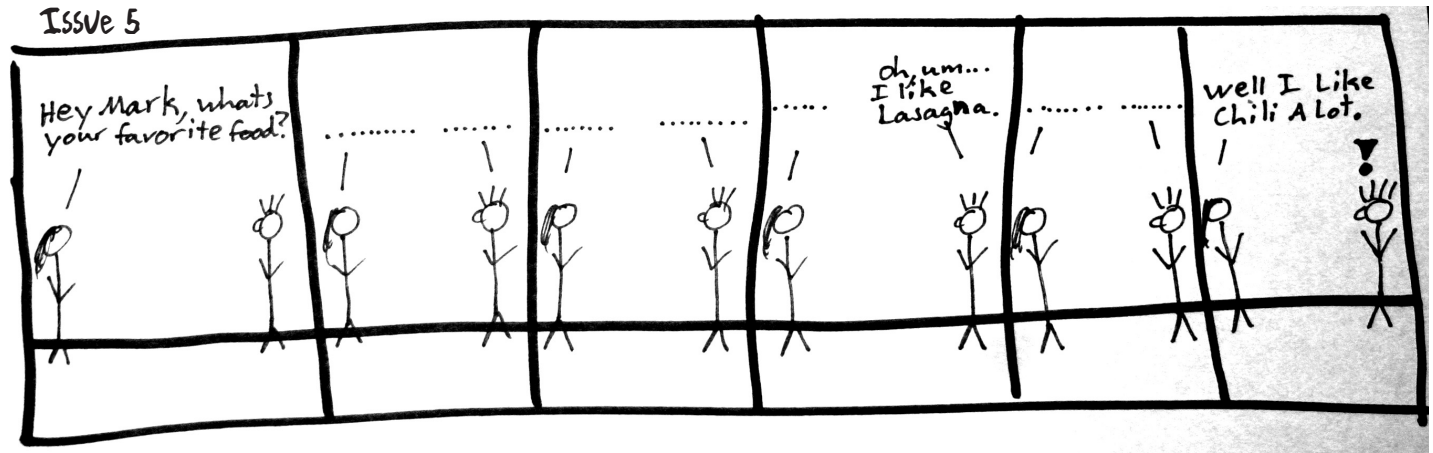
Issue 3



Issue 4



Issue 5



the Art of Bullshitting

by: J. S. Hilliard

Ah, the end of the semester.... When a young man's fancy turns to final papers. It is this excuse I offer you for this poorly planned (and executed) article you are now reading. With final papers looming down upon us all, I imagine that many of you first years are overwhelmed at the moment. You have so many pages to write! But fear not little ones, for I bring you good tidings of great joy along with a guide for more easily reaching those requirements of 10, 15, or even 20 pages. So here is my first (and most likely final) practical Omen article.

Hints and tips to extend paper length:

- Add a header or footer. One could always include a header throughout their paper with one's name, the date, and the class title, or a footer with page numbers. This bumps your text down (or possible up) one or two lines, effectively giving you a longer paper.

- Make the margins larger. Fool around with the margins. Compose the piece with 1 inch margins, and when stretching to reach your goal, increase the margins by one tenth of an inch until satisfied. (WARNING: Do not increase margins by more than one fourth of an inch – it soon becomes much too apparent.)

- Increase the font size. This is the

easiest trick, and the easiest too notice. If possible, increase by one tenth of a font, rather than a full font size, i.e. 12 to 12.1 rather than 12 to 13. Generally not recommended.

- Spell out names/dates/numbers/etc. Do not abbreviate names or dates. Spell out full names, rather than just a person's last name (titles are also great, such as Sir, Baron, Princess, etc.). Write 'fourteen' rather than '14'. This only gets you a bit of space, but every little bit counts.

- Use footnotes. You'll be amazed how much space footnotes can take up compared to other forms of citations. Highly recommended over any other forms of citations.

- Create a title and subtitle. Head your paper with a title and subtitle, both of larger than average text and bolded. Boom! One quarter of the first page already used up.

- Add images throughout the paper. Though not appropriate for all papers, a few well placed pictures/illustrations/graphs can eat up quite a bit of paper space. Even papers were this normally is not appropriate can use a title page with a full page image – and just like that one page is down.

- Create distinct sections in the paper broken up by subtitles and best of all, blank lines. A great way to burn up more

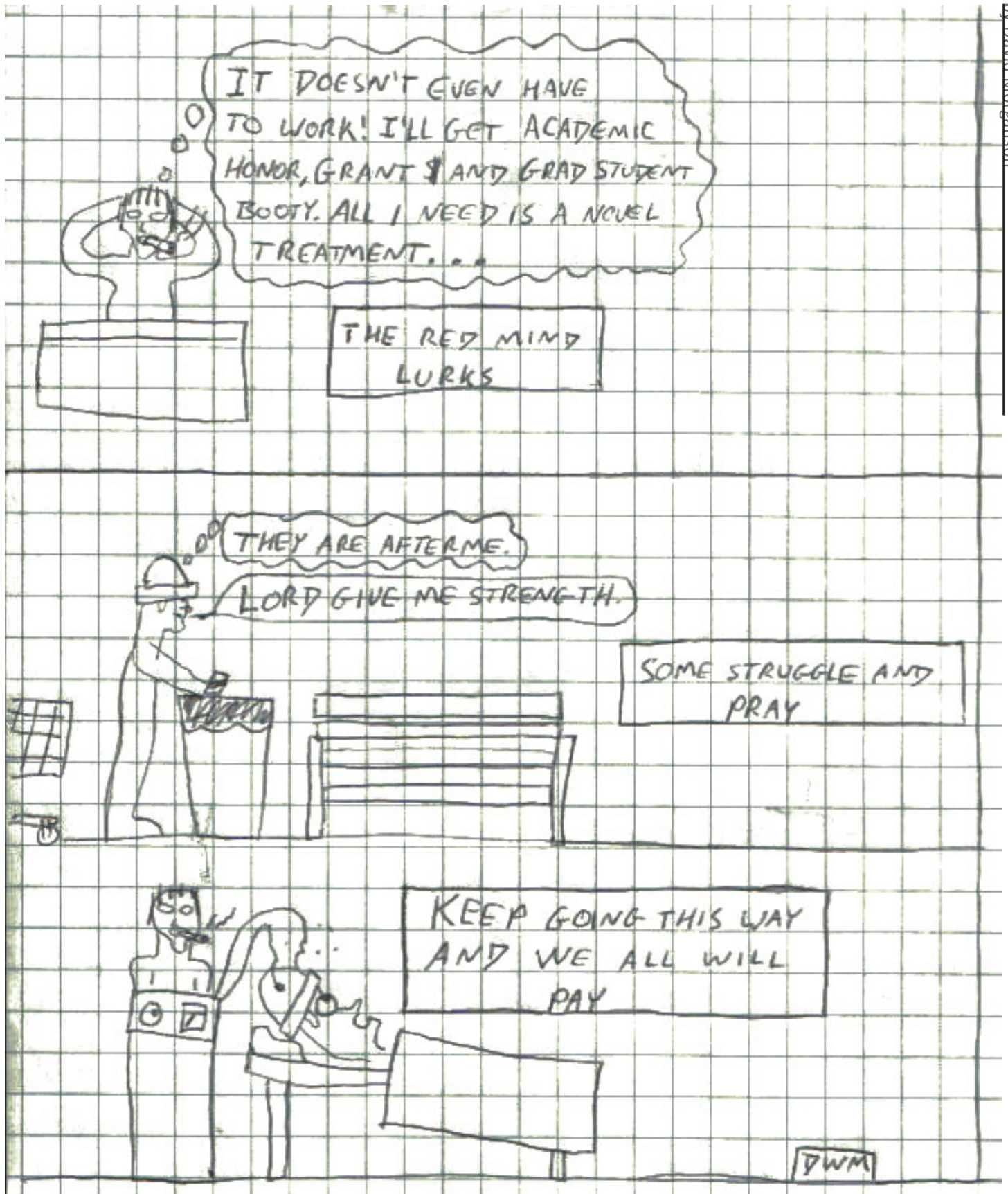
space – it can often make your paper easier to read, and best of all, easier to write. Highly recommended.

- Add to paragraphs so that they use another line of text. Take a look at all of the final sentences of paragraphs throughout the paper. Do they reach at least half-way across the page? If so, you may be able to add to the paragraph so that the final sentence extends beyond the line it now occupies and the last word will need to be placed on a new line!

- Separate a very long paragraph into two different paragraphs. This can get tricky, and be sure not to disturb the narrative flow of the paper. This is generally not recommended, but can be effective if necessary.

Keeping all of these tips in mind, nearly any paper length soon becomes manageable. Hampshire College, and higher education in general, is all about bullshitting – the professors bullshit you, and you bullshit them back. The important thing is to make your bullshitting tactful: it shouldn't be painfully obvious (though it certainly will be obvious). Bullshitting is kind of like masturbation – everyone does it but no one really wants to talk about it, and the less apparent it is the better.





Chapter Five

by Michael Petersen

The reason Petra had asked me about Sere was that he and several other high officials of the Empire were scheduled to be executed on the next day. The Baron Idatamis and the other surviving members of the Rikar were to be included in this execution. At last, I would have the chance for revenge that I had been waiting for, or so I thought.

The day of the execution was a cool day, giving us Tuelans a momentary respite from the usual heat. It was an overcast day in which the world was cast into a palette of drab grays. Dark clouds hovered over the air above me, obscuring the sunlight and soothing my eyelids. There was a massive crowd congregated around the execution site. It was the same execution site that the Empire had used when it desired to publicly execute dissidents. Shoving past the others, I was able to get a spot along the aisle that Sere and the others would be marching down. It was a rather plain layout. Seven stakes for seven people.

Then I saw the procession come into view, flanked by Alliance troops. I trembled with excitement as the anticipation of the ecstasy to come entered me. I could not wait for them to come by so that they could see that it was I who would survive and they who would be killed. They continued to approach, marching with the dignified appearance of martyrs about to go out in a blaze of glory. When they finally came into

speaking distance, I leaned forward and unleashed all of the hatred that I had bottled up inside over the past year.

“Baron Idatamis! Sere Cahan! Do you remember this face? Sere, do you remember my promise? It is over for you now, Sere, your time has finally come. I am the symbol of those you have murdered. Elohim himself has sent me here to drag your worthless carcass down to the depths of hell! It is your turn to suffer as I did. And like Eleanor did! You had better hope that Thanatos has more pity on you than you did for me because you will need all the pity you can get!” The proud demeanor over Sere’s face melted into a pale visage of a ghost as he began to tremble and whimper like a kicked dog, hopelessly resisting the inevitable walk to the gallows. I continued to cackle and shout abuse at them as the people around me merely stared in disbelief, wondering what was wrong with me. The seven men were then readied for execution as an Alliance spokesperson, an Elvish man with long blond hair, read their crimes aloud to the crowd. I turned to face the seven men, laughing all the while. I noticed that the men were being painted with some type of fluid as the speaker continued to read the accusation.

“May Elohim have mercy upon your souls. The people of Zimria who have suffered at your hands have none for you,” the speaker finished.

An Alliance soldier went by with a torch and lit all seven of them on fire. The heat from their burning bodies rushed up against my face and the repulsive smell of their charred flesh permeated the air. I had experienced this scent before. *The fire torture.* The crackling of the flames dominated the square and echoed through my head. Then, even more terrifying, the screams of the condemned men, like the desperate cries of suffering animals on the verge of death, rose up to challenge the unruly flame. As the fire continued to consume them, their bodies began to give out smoke, fouling up the courtyard and causing people in the crowd to choke and vomit, which only added to the unbearable stink. Until now, I had been full of hatred, but now my hatred was spent, and I once again felt empty inside. The poor souls were quite dead now, but the traumatic effect upon the frightened crowd was still very much alive. Many in the crowd were women and children who had never experienced the atrocities of war. As the hysteria continued to build, people around me began to break down and cry. As for myself, I had witnessed such things before, but that could not stop the tears from running down my face.

“Why did you cry for them?” Anaril interrupted, “They would not have cried for you as they led you to your execution. They did not pity you as they tortured

you in their dungeons.” Tajere paused as he thought it over.

“If they had succeeded in killing me and they had never died, I would not have pitied them. But, for that brief period of time, they were the only others who knew what it felt like to suffer as I did.”

Soon rain began to drizzle down over the melancholy scene. It doused the flames, revealing ashen, ghoulish corpses, their faces frozen in the agony of death. As the rain fell and the wind blew, their bodies crumbled before my eyes. The nightmare had ended and the crowd dissipated back into their daily lives. It appeared that the execution had fulfilled its purpose. The people of Tuela were now broken and spiritless, incapable of putting up any further resistance, and so was I. So much for my dreams of peace and reconciliation. They remained just that. Dreams.

I trudged through the exiting horde and walked into an empty alley, away from the main crowds. There I saw a disheartened young man, still in his soldier’s uniform. He had a long, scruffy beard thatched with dried food and debris. His dirty, torn uniform; his feet hanging out of his ragged, worn out shoes. He shivered as he held his tattered hat towards me and stared at me with pitiful eyes. At first, I felt compassion for him, but then I looked deeper into his face. I knew I had seen it somewhere once before.

Then I remembered. The blood

began to heat up within me. Glancing around, I noticed a large, triangular shaped rock on the ground. I began to bend over to pick it up. I noticed a smile come over his face. He thought I was going to help him. Then my hand clasped the vengeful rock.

“Murderer!” His eyes shot open with surprise and his smile vanished. I smashed the flat end of the rock into his face, breaking his nose. He gasped with as he struggled to recover from the blow. His hat dropped onto the earth and two coins bounced out of it, ringing against the gravel. As I stepped forward to strike him again, my foot ground it into the dust.

“Murderer! You killed a defenseless mother and her child during the war!” The soldier began to mumble, but no words came out of his mouth. Contact. The flesh around his ear rupturing, a syrupy goo bubbling out from under his skin. Sticking his dirty fingers into the fresh head wound, a futile attempt to halt the massive bleeding.

He cried out in pain and turned to flee, struggling to escape from the clutches of his predator, but I brought the rock back over his head as he turned away, knocking him to the ground. He trembled with fear, weeping as he put his hands over his face, attempting to stave off his immanent death. Gnashing what was left of my ravaged teeth together, I continued to assault his face, shouting and cursing until my words began to dissipate into a stream of incoherent

grunting and screaming. He was now bleeding profusely out of his shattered mouth, spitting out broken teeth and weakly attempting to hold his broken jaw together with his arm. One of his eyes was stabbed out and the other completely pulverized, merely red and white slime dangling out of his empty socket. His face was a cornucopia of blacks and blues with rivers of crimson flooding what was left of his flapping cheeks. His world was now one of darkness and pain. The sensation of being struck by an all-powerful and unknown force, unable to resist, yet clinging on to what painful life is still left. Still the rock descended like a hammer, incessant and merciless, until the contents of his skull began to churn forth out of what was once his face. When I finished, his head was a crushed pulp, oozing out of his neck. Then I thrust the rock deep into the chambers of his cankerous heart. The final jet of blood splashed upon my face and exhaustion crept over my body, bringing me back down to the earth.

When I awoke, I found my face resting upon the remnants of his head. I looked at myself and saw a butcher, covered from head to toe with blood and grime. As I faced the ground, a river of blood streamed along the alleyway. *My God, what have I done?* I had to leave before someone else found me. But where could I possibly go? I knew of only one person to turn to.



The Omen Presents: The Best Bad Jokes You've Ever Heard!

What's green and flies? Super Pickle!

A man walks into a bar. He says "Ow"

A priest, a rabbi, and a hooker are having a drink in a bar. They all die.

What's black and white and read all over? A newspaper. A zebra falling down the stairs.

What's the difference between 100 dead babies and a Corvette? I don't have a Corvette in my garage.

What's the difference between an onion and a hippy? I cried when I cut the onion.

What do you get when you cross a pit-bull with a hooker? Your last blow-job.

What do you call a dead blonde in a closet? The hide-and-seek champion of '86.

What's more pathetic than a 35 year old virgin? A 35 year old virgin with AIDS.

How do you kill a blonde? Put a scratch and sniff sticker at the bottom of a pool.

What's black and white and red and can't fit through a revolving door? A nun with a spear chucked through her head.

What's messier than 10 dead babes nailed to a tree? One dead baby nailed to 10 trees.

What's the worst thing about fucking a dead baby? Wiping the blood off of your clown suit.

Knock, Knock. Who's there? Boo. Boo who? Don't cry, its only joke.

Why don't women wear watches? They make clocks on the stove for a reason.

What's the best thing about having sex with twenty eight year olds? There are twenty of them.

Yo mamma is like the 19th Century Marxist socio-economic thought: every worker gets a share.

What's the difference between a dead hooker and a monster? There aren't any monsters under my bed.

Yo mamma's like a shotgun: one cock and she blows.

Why didn't Helen Keller drive? Because she was a woman.

Why did the chicken IRS representative cross the road? To bankrupt the other side.

What did the leper say to the hooker? Keep the tip.

What's brown and sticky? A stick.

What's brown and shiny and sounds like a bell? Dung!

What's big and yellow and fell out of a tree? A tractor.

How do you get Helen Keller to keep a secret? Break her fingers.

What kind of dog tells time? A watch dog.

Yo mamma is so ugly they filmed "Gorillas in the Mist" in her shower.

Two peanuts were walking down the road. One was assaulted!

Two pretzles were sitting in a bowl. One was assaulted!

An orange was being peeled. One was assaulted!

Gregory went to class. One was assaulted!

My toothbrush is old. One was assaulted!

Two college girls went to a frat party. One was assaulted!

What's the value of an octopi? 8.1415....

What did the horse say when the farmer fed it metal? "I don't like metal."

What do you call a pessimistic bison? A buffano

What do you call a bison tailor? A buffasew.

What do you call a bison that can't impregnate its mate? A buffalow sperm count.

What do you call a promiscuous bison? A WHORE!

How do you get an elephant in a safe way? You take the a out of safe and the f out of way.

What's black and black and black and black and has a lightbulb inside of it? A peanut butter and jelly sandwich with a lightbulb inside of it.

What do you get when you put a dead baby in the microwave? An erection.

Why did Molly fall of the swing? Because she had no arms.

What do you call a bug that breaks the fourth wall? A pest-aside.

What did Jesus say to the inkeeper? "Here's a couple of nails, put me up for the night."

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Joe.

Joe who?

Joe Schmoe.

I don't get it.

It's not a joke. That's my name.

No, really?

Oh. That's weird. Why don't you come in.

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Orange.

Orange who?

Orange you glad I di-aw shit. I messed up. Knock knock.

I've heard this one.

No, no, no. Let me just say it.

Ok...

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Banana.

sigh. Banana who?

Knock knock!

FUCK YOU!

How many mice does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

Only two, but we don't know how they got in there.

Lawyers are evil!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

How many Gods does it take to change a lightbulb?

Irrelevant. God's light shines on everybody.

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Banana.

Fuck you!

What did the farmer say when he saw his tractor rolling down the hill?

"There goes my tractor."

What did the farmer say when he lost his truck?

"Where's my truck?"

What did the mom say to her family when she got home from the doctor?

"I have cancer."

What's the difference between Christopher Reeves and O. J.?

O. J. will walk.

What's the difference between a horse and Chelsea Clinton?

Someday, someone will need a horse.

What do you do when a drummer shows up at your door.

Tip him for the pizza.

What do you call a rock band? Three musicians and a drummer.

What do you call a drummer who just broke up with his girlfriend? Homeless.

Knock knock.

Fuck you.

What's the difference between a dead baby and an apple?

I don't cum on the apple before I eat it.

Two musicians are walking down the street. One says to the other, "Who was the piccolo I saw you with last night?" The other replies, "That was no piccolo, that was my fife."

Oh. We have a quarter of a column. Does anyone know more jokes? Yeah.

What did the person telling the joke say to the other person? A joke.

What's the difference between the chemo patient and a skinhead? The chemo patient has cancer

A rabbi, a priest, and a minister walk into a bar. They leave feeling much more enlightened about religion.

What do you call it when the Omen editors run out of jokes to tell? We fucked your mom last night.



Stereoptographs! From the Late 1800s



“Why you little beauty! How long have you been our cook?”



“You bashful little Creature.”



“Oh! You naughty man!”



“Footsteps - My Wife! Mum's the Word!”



“Horrors! It’s mean to put those dangerous things in there!”



“How can she resist me!”



“Robbing the Male.”



“Cotton is King, Plantation Scene - Georgia, 1895.
This is a scene to delight a painter, and at the same time, a condensed encyclopedia of one of the greatest industries in the entire world!

~~WOMEN~~

